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Palestinian children march in Hebron yesterday to mark Palestinian Independence Day, declared eight years ago by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. While the IDF has dramatically scaled down its presence in most of Hebron, soldiers shadowed the marchers. (Next: Jon Immanuel; Photo: Reuters)

'Hot pursuit' issue delays Hebron deal

BATSHEVA TSUR
and JON IMMANUEL

INTENSIVE diplomatic activity continued last night, as Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams sat down to hammer out the last-minute details of the Hebron redeployment agreement.

"We are at the endgame," a senior government source said last night, "but it is unlikely that we will see an agreement by [today]."

Officials in the Prime Minister's Office said the cabinet - which has to approve the agreement - would devote today's weekly meeting to other matters.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu - who canceled his trip to the US to oversee the sensitive finish to the negotiations - spoke last night with US President Bill Clinton, updating him on the latest round of negotiations. Late Wednesday night, US Middle East peace talks coordinator Dennis Ross stopped off at Ben-Gurion Airport, on his way from Cairo to Washington, for



talks with US Ambassador Martin Indyk.

Sources said there was no attempt on the part of the Americans to put pressure on Israel. "Clinton knows that it is the Palestinians who are holding up the agreement," they said.

When Netanyahu called Jordan's King Hussein yesterday to wish him a happy birthday, he asked him to press Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to move forward on the agreement. Hussein reportedly replied: "The best gift I can get will be an agreement on Hebron."

A short while later, Hussein phoned Netanyahu back to report on his conversation with Arafat.

The negotiations continued at the Jerusalem office of Yitzhak Mordechai, Netanyahu's legal adviser. But the senior source said they were treading water until orders arrived from Arafat. Although a meeting between Netanyahu and Arafat is in the offing, it will not take place "until there is agreement," the source added.

The source defended the proposed agreement, saying it had improved conditions for the Jewish settlers over that worked out by the previous government. Improvements include:

- agreement on the height of Palestinian buildings around the Jewish quarter;
- the establishment of 300-meter-deep buffer zones where armed persons are barred and large crowds can only enter with permission;
- joint patrols and separate Israeli armed patrols in the buffer zone;
- moving four police stations, where the Palestinian Police can keep their weapons, to a distance of 1 kilometer from Jewish settle-

ments. The main stumbling block to finalizing the agreement, the source said, continues to be the question of hot pursuit by the IDF into the H-1 area, the 85 percent of the city exclusively controlled by the PA.

In advance of redeployment, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said the army and police have been ordered to send in necessary forces into Hebron to prevent friction between Jewish and Arab residents of the city.

In Hebron, the two battalions which are normally positioned there have been reinforced to a reportedly 1,000-member force, including female riot police.

Almost everything in the Hebron talks except hot pursuit has been settled, and the gap on this matter has narrowed to whether the IDF, after an attack, can unilaterally chase terrorists into areas controlled by the Palestinian Police, Palestinian sources close to the talks said.

Another issue is a Palestinian (Continued on Page 14)

The final hours before redeployment

A KLEZMER band escorts a bar mitzva boy from Givatayim and his entourage of 300 friends and relatives down the steps of the Machpela Cave in Hebron yesterday.

Down the street, Noam Arnon, a high-profile leader of the Hebron settlement, wades into a crowd of Palestinians, and an animated discussion begins. Hands are clasped, wrists are grabbed. It looks like a lively discussion at a Betar Jerusalem soccer game.

These are not scenes we have come to expect in this town, not at this time. But it is all part of the carnival feeling that has gripped Hebron in these days - or is it hours, or is it minutes - before the IDF redeployment.

A Palestinian yells at Arnon to tell Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to ease the closure.

"We also want you to be able to work"

HERB KEINON

Arnon replies. "But there are terrorists here." "There are Jewish terrorists as well," a Palestinian shouts back. "When the Palestinians take over security, there will be security here."

Cameras are whirring, microphones recording it all. Indeed, it is the cameras and microphones that are providing the background music, blurring the distinction between what is real in Hebron, and what is not.

The hours leading up to the final redeployment agreement have brought to the town all kinds of people who generally would not be there. Politicians, journalists, tourists, far-rightists' entourages, Jewish cowboys - people like Mordechai Levy, head of the Jewish Defense Organization in New York, who says that his

job in the US is to protect Jews, to be an army of sorts for American Jews.

It's Levy's first time in Hebron. "Where's the Jewish neighborhood," he asks? Then he answers himself, "There is no Jewish neighborhood. It's all mixed, not like Brooklyn."

All eyes are on Hebron, and many of the residents, both Jews and Palestinians, are reveling in the attention. People like attention, and they perform.

One goes to Hebron expecting to be able to touch the tension. But it's not like that, at least it hasn't been like that over the last few days.

True, there is tension on the faces of the police when they walk a dignitary - yesterday it was Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon - through the city's streets. They finger their guns and look nervously at the buildings.

(Continued on Page 14)

Journalists accused of offering bribes for 'dirt' on Netanyahu

ICHAL YUDELMAN

Le... thesis the beginning of gossip-gate? And just how far will Israeli journalists stoop for the inside dirt - and we do mean dirt - on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his family?

According to Edna Halabani, union leader of workers in the Prime Minister's Office, certain journalists have tried to buy "juicy details" about Netanyahu and his family from workers in the office.

In an interview yesterday with my Radio's Razi Barkai, Halabani said Israeli journalists have offered huge amounts of money, sometimes several thousand dollars, for information about the prime minister's breakfast or how many times "little Yair [his son] washed his hands today."

"They call our workers and start questioning them, offering us money, wishing to know all kinds of things about Mrs. Netanyahu - what she was wearing, what she wanted, what the prime minister ate for breakfast and what he says to Sara. It has simply gone out of control," Halabani said.

"I have served under several prime ministers and I have never seen such behavior, such interests by journalists in the private life of a prime minister and his family," she said. "I don't belong to a political party and I am not the prime minister's spokeswoman. What has occurred in recent weeks, the efforts by the media to obtain information, passes all boundaries and has even broken the law."

She said the journalists refuse to give their names or for whom they work.

Halabani said she has not filed a complaint with the police because (Continued on Page 2)

High Court okays physical pressure against Jihad member

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice acceded late last night to the state's request to be allowed to use physical pressure to interrogate a man suspected of having critical information about an imminent terror attack.

Mohammed Hamadan is a known Islamic Jihad activist. He was one of the deportees to Lebanon in 1992 and has spent much of his time since under

arrest or administrative detention. On October 7, he was put in detention again, but was transferred to the General Security Service for interrogation on October 24.

On Tuesday, he petitioned the High Court for an injunction against the GSS's interrogation methods, and a day later the state consented, saying the GSS did not intend to use physical force (Continued on Page 2)

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HEBRON - AT A GLANCE

Palestinian Population: approximately 120,000
 Jewish Population: 500, including 45 families and 150 yeshiva students.
 Jewish Population of adjacent Kiryat Arba - 8,000

The Jewish population of Hebron is concentrated in a number of buildings and housing complexes. Nineteen families live in buildings adjacent to the Avraham Avinu courtyard, which also includes two kindergartens, the municipal committee offices, and a guest house. Seven families live in mobile homes at Tel Rumeida; 12 families live in Beit Hadassah, six families in Beit Schneersohn, one family in Beit Kastel, and six families in Beit Chason. Beit Romano, home to the Shavei Hebron yeshiva, is currently being refurbished.

Background
 Hebron, site of the Machpela Cave, where the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah are buried, is considered the second holiest city in the Jewish faith.

Jews lived in Hebron almost continuously throughout the Byzantine, Arab, Mameluke, and Ottoman periods. However, the Jewish community was destroyed during a massacre in 1929, in which Arabs killed 67 Jews and forced hundreds of others to flee from the town.

The city was captured by the IDF during the Six Day War. In April, 1968, a group of Jewish activists registered at the Park Hotel and announced that they had come to re-establish a Jewish presence in the city. The first apartment buildings in Kiryat Arba were completed in 1972 and the first Jewish presence in Hebron itself was established in April, 1979.

Location
 Hebron is located 32 km. south of Jerusalem and is situated between 870 meters and 1,020 meters above sea level. The city is built on several hills and wadis. The hills, overlooking the Hebron Jewish community, are situated in the territory due to be handed over to the Palestinians and constitute one of the prime causes of concern for the safety of the Jewish residents.

Source: Government Press Office

Arbel, Shoham: Massive use of detentions to ease Hebron redeployment not an option

IT is not true that the army is planning a widespread use of administrative detentions to prevent problems during the redeployment in Hebron, State Attorney Edna Arbel and Judge Advocate General Uri Shoham told the Knesset Law Committee yesterday.

Such wholesale use would not stand up to either the internal supervision of their respective offices or the supervision of the courts, the two said, because each order is carefully scrutinized to ensure that the intelligence information justifying the detention is reliable, that an indictment - even on a lesser charge - is not possible and that no lesser infringement of the detainee's freedom will prevent the feared danger.

"In many cases we have not approved [a military commander's request for detention]," Shoham noted.

Shoham said administrative detention orders generally were used when there is reliable intelligence information against someone, but the army does not want to indict the suspect in open court for fear of compromising valuable intelligence sources. Faced with a choice between compromising these sources and letting a suspected terrorist go free to commit his crimes, the army would choose to let the terrorist walk, he said. But administrative detention - which requires neither charge nor trial and allows the evidence to be kept from the suspect and his lawyer - provides a way to put such people behind bars without compromising intelligence sources. Therefore, in the army's opinion, it saves lives, he said.

This undoubtedly violates human rights, he added, but the very real threat of terrorism makes it necessary.

However, some MKs hotly rejected this approach. MK Dedi Zucker (Meretz) pointed out that there are currently 274 administrative detainees - one Jewish and 273 Arab. Since 1987, there have been some 14,000 administrative detention orders.

"The price Israeli democracy pays for this is too heavy," he said, adding that it is hard to believe all these detentions were justified when no one is allowed to see the alleged evidence.

MK Abdul Malik Dahamshe (Democratic Arab Party), a lawyer, told the committee that he represented one detainee who was put in detention because of his alleged connection with a wanted terrorist. After the judge hearing the case accidentally revealed this fact, the man was able to prove that it was a case of mistaken identity - two people with the same name. There are doubtless many similar cases, Dahamshe said, but when detainees are not even told why they are being held, it is impossible to disprove the allegations against them.

EVELYN GORDON

"Administrative detention is a stain on Israeli society," MK Yossi Beilin (Labor) agreed. "I'm not willing for administrative detentions to exist in my society ... just as I am not willing for the death penalty to be an option."

However, there were also many MKs who supported Shoham's approach.

"I suggest that while you're speaking about democracy, you also remember Bus No. 5 in Dizengoff [in which 22 people were killed by a suicide bomber in 1994]," MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) said. "Under the current situation, administrative detentions are a necessity."

MKs Moshe Shahal and Haim Ramon (Labor) also agreed that detentions are sometimes necessary, and said this is especially true prior to the Hebron withdrawal.

"With respect to the [Jewish] residents of Hebron, we know who they are. We hear them on the radio. We know what they have done in the past. ... Can someone honestly tell me they don't constitute a danger?" Shahal said.

"I recommend putting everyone who says he intends to blow up the Hebron agreement into adminis-

trative detention," Ramon added. However, Zucker and committee chairman Shaul Yahalom (National Religious Party) retorted that anyone openly making threats on TV and radio can be legally prosecuted, so administrative detentions are not needed in this case.

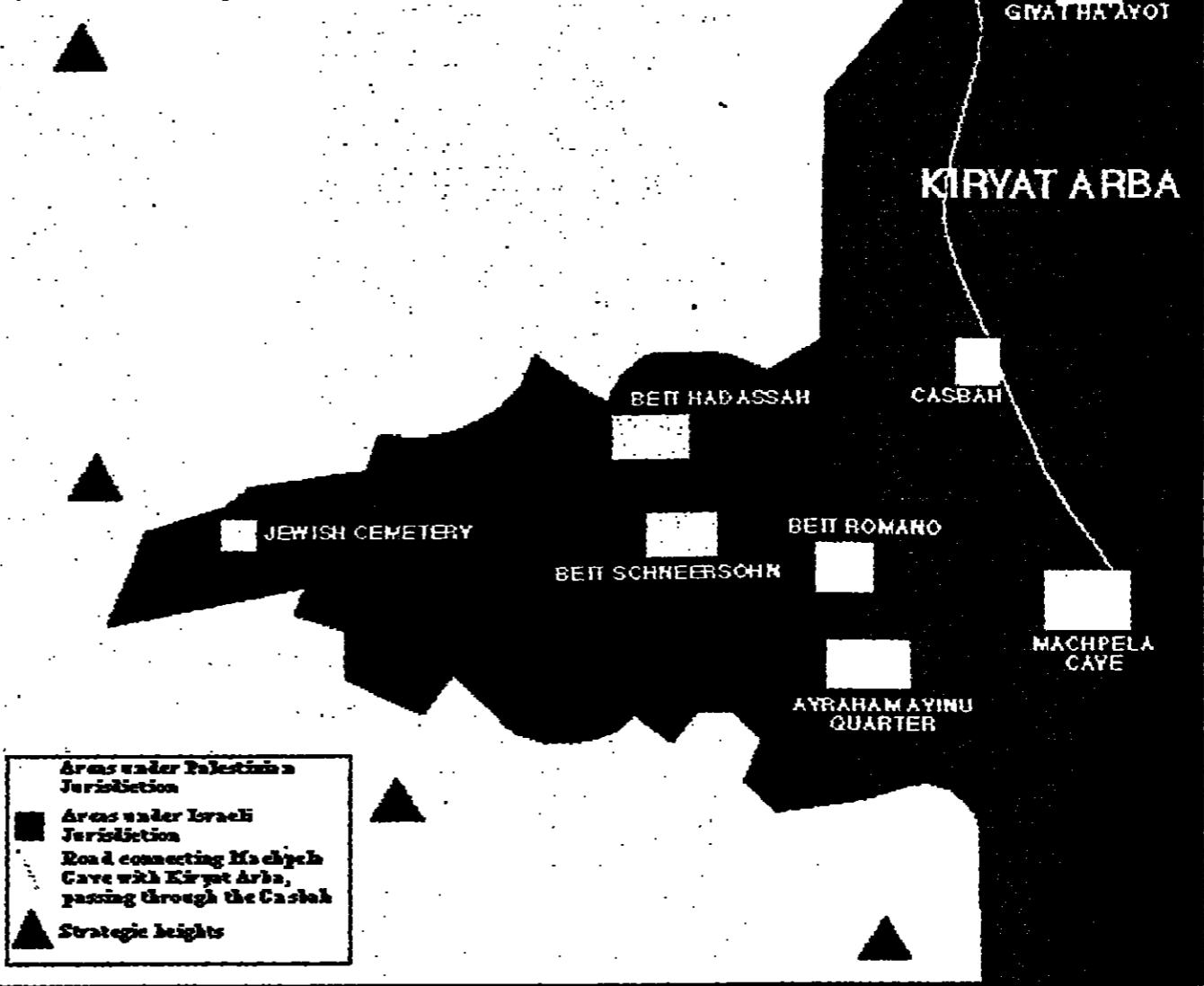
"We can't say that because of [former Kach spokesman and Hebron resident] Noam Federman, we are willing to continue administrative detentions," Beilin said.

Zucker and Beilin said they plan to introduce a bill to outlaw administrative detentions. Yahalom, however, suggested that they concentrate instead on trying to restrict the use of this tool. If they were unable to outlaw detentions while occupying powerful positions in the previous government, they will not be able to do so now, he said.

The two replied that they would assist Yahalom's effort as well if it were directed at all detentions, but refused to countenance the bill he proposed on Wednesday, which would help Jewish detainees only.

"Human rights can't be partitioned," Zucker said. "Yahalom, however, said his distinction between citizens and non-citizens is justifiable."

HEBRON REDEPLOYMENT (Proposed)



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 (Netanyahu, *Arutz 7*, May 7, 1996)

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 (Netanyahu, Knesset speech, September 7, 1995)

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NEWS IN FOCUS

The Jerusalem Post Friday, November 15, 1996

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HEBRON: Scars on both sides of the divide

Death spewed forth in the dark



Shlomo Slonim, one year of age in the photo, is held close in the aftermath of the 1929 Hebron Massacre. A scar from the gash on his forehead remains today. (reprint by Sarit Uziely)

A survivor of the Goldstein massacre recalls the nightmare to Jon Immanuel

FAHRI Maswadi does not have memories of the massacre in the Haram al-Ibrahimi so much as brief moments of reprieve from memory. But even that is not strictly true. Frequently his wife wakes him in the middle of the night to ask why he screamed.

"I screamed?"
"Yes, she tells him, you shouted. 'Get out of here, get us out of here.'"

What he remembers clearly is the claustrophobia, and an explosion five minutes after the beginning of dawn prayers during Ramadan, on February 25, 1994. Some 800 people were in the mosque, 29 died and more than 200 were wounded. In the dark, "the building shook, then we heard shooting, automatic fire. I fell to the floor. Then it stopped. I thought it was over. I got up and it started again. I could not breathe."

Maswadi, a 50-year-old father of eight, could not breathe because a bullet punctured a fire extinguisher near him releasing carbon dioxide. He has subsequently learned. The gas, the cordite, the sound of bullets reverberating around the place of worship, tripping in the dark over inert bodies, slipping in pools of blood and on internal organs, injected Maswadi with a feeling of terror that won't go away.

Terror and loathing. With no conscious irony he describes how



Fahri Maswadi stands outside the Tomb of the Patriarchs. After surviving the trauma of the Ramadan 1994 massacre, he can no longer bring himself to worship there. (Hayef Hashlamoun)

people ran from the Tomb of the shared Patriarch Abraham to seek protection by the Tomb of the Patriarch Jacob, and then were trapped when they could not exit by Joseph's Gate. Maswadi heard shooting outside and also thought he heard shots coming from two different directions inside the prayer hall, but in retrospect understood that was probably caused by an echo.

Unlike subsequent Palestinian attacks, the shooting was the act of an individual. But because he was in IDF uniform with an IDF weapon, and because soldiers began shooting rioting Palestinians outside, and in the confusion blocked ambulances from certain exits, then slammed

curfews on the Palestinians while leaving the settlers in place. Moslem anger and predisposition welded into a conviction of IDF-settler solidarity.

The army and the Border Police do little to eradicate this impression. Last Wednesday they performed riot-control training in front of Joseph's Gate, leaping from jeeps, and adopting kneeling positions as they aimed automatic weapons at the exit which Maswadi says the army blocked off to worshipers fleeing Goldstein. "They do this often," Maswadi said.

He cannot bring himself to go into the mosque anymore, and has moved home. "I hate the sight of blood and I still see it on the car-

pets, the same carpets that have been cleaned."

Maswadi, who lived at the time in a house by Abner's Tomb opposite The Tomb of the Patriarchs, had gone to the mosque with his nine-year-old son, Karam. He was lucky. Neither was wounded. He saw death spew forth, but in the dark, he did not even see Dr. Baruch Goldstein firing, reloading and firing again.

Hamadi Muhtaseb, a 28-year-old accountant, saw even less. He was bending forward in prayer when a bullet struck him in the spine. He lost consciousness, and despite extensive physiotherapy, walks now, but only with crutches. His loss of consciousness at least

(Continued on Page 8)

Fears of 'another 1929'

The Jews of Hebron warn of slaughter. Herb Keinon spoke to a survivor of 1929

TARPAT.

It is a word repeated over and over like a steady drum beat by settlers in Hebron and Kiryat Arba when asked about redeployment, or about why they live where they live.

Tarpat.

It is not a word, but a Hebrew year: 5689. The Gregorian equivalent is 1929 — the year of the Arab riots in Mandatory Palestine, the year of the massacre of the Jewish community in Hebron.

Tarpat.

It colors everything for the Jews of Hebron, even 67 years later.

"If the IDF leaves the hills in Hebron, what you will have is tarpat," Noam Amon, the head of the settlement in Hebron, admonished Likud MK Gideon Ezra when the Knesset member visited the city last month. "The Arabs will once again come down and slaughter the Jews. It will be tarpat."

"This is Jewish property that belonged to Jews slaughtered in tarpat," said Kiryat Arba Local Council head Zvi Katzover following an attempt by Jews to make a claim on stores they say is Jewish property near the casbah. During this attempt to reclaim Jewish property, the Hebron settlement — referring to the massacre — issued a statement that quoted from Kings 1:21: "Did you kill and also take possession?"

"A massacre could transpire here within an hour," Hebron rabbi Moshe Levinger told members of the National Religious Party's central committee recently. "We saw what happened in tarpat."

Tarpat.

THE JEWS in Hebron — who live under veritable siege in harsh physical conditions — have submerged their present to lay claim to a distant past, to regain the glories of the city that was King David's capital, to be close to the tombs of the patriarchs and matriarchs buried there.

But it is not only antiquity that motivates them. More often than not, Hebron's Jews say they moved there fueled by a desire not to give Hebron's Arabs a prize for the massacre of 1929. For the Jews living in Hebron today, 1929 is as real as yes-

terday, and to move back into Hebron is to redeem those who were massacred. To now pull out is in their minds equivalent to saying the victims of 1929 died for nothing.

In one of the numerous demonstrations held in the city last month, a group of women held pictures of children killed or wounded in the 1929 massacre, when 67 Jews were killed, and more than 50 injured. One of those pictures was of a frightened-looking curly-haired boy with a deep gash on his forehead.

That boy, Shlomo Slonim, is today 68 and lives with his wife in Ra'anana. If the Jews of Hebron have the massacre etched into their minds, Slonim has it pounded into his mind, heart and body. His immediate family was killed in the massacre. In addition, he still carries the forehead scar caused by a blow taken to the head during the riots.

Slonim is the son of Eliezer Dan Slonim, one of the Jewish notables in Hebron. In addition to losing his father, Slonim also lost his mother, brother and maternal grandparents. A fifth-generation Hebronite, Slonim was one year old when the massacre took place.

"Ever since I can remember, I knew what happened," said Slonim, who was raised by a grandfather who survived the massacre, and then — when the grandfather died seven years later — by an aunt. His grandfather did not talk much about the events, "but I smelled something different. I knew my grandfather was not my father. I knew about what happened."

Switching to the third person, Slonim said: "For an infant to be in a house where a massacre is taking place, to hear the screams, it penetrates his brain. And then everything is gone, everybody is gone. This is not simple."

Twenty-three people were killed in the Slonim home, where some 70 people sought refuge. Many of the city's Jews thought the Slonim home would be a safe haven, since Eliezer Dan, a banker, was a member of the municipality and well known by the town's Arabs.

The 1929 riots began on August 23, about a week after a right-wing

(Continued on Page 8)

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Will she be America's first woman president?

New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, who visited Israel this week, talks with Jennifer Friedlin



Governor Whitman: Fiscally savvy, she is known for her ability to tackle tough problems head on. (Debbie Taylor-Zimelman)

While critics take issue with Whitman for creating only a quarter of the 450,000 jobs she promised and for being an unapologetic millionaire, according to opinion polls more than 60% of New Jerseyans support her.

And, although Whitman's brand of liberal Republicanism may be scoffed at by the more extremist members of the GOP, she says the center is where the people are at and what many politicians on both the state and national levels are delivering.

As Congress cuts Federal support of state-run programs, she says many Republicans, namely mayors Rudolph Giuliani of New York and Brett Schundler of Jersey City (in New Jersey) are taking control of developing social service programs.

On the gubernatorial level she says her administration is reaching out to communities to develop programs based on what the people want, rather than what Congress determines they need.

And even though Bob Dole failed in his recent presidential election bid, Whitman finds proof of American support for the GOP. Besides the fact that Americans voted for a Republican Congress - the only time since 1928 that Republicans kept control of Congress in back-to-back elections - at the executive level President Clinton supported the Welfare Reform Act, which was a Republican-initiated piece of legislation.

In fact, Whitman says, Clinton's victory was a vote of confidence for the GOP's platform.

"People voted for Clinton because they didn't want to jeopardize anything," she says. "They are just making ends meet now. And the economy is growing, at an anemic rate, but it's growing."

"The voters did support the Republican ideas and ideology; they revoted for the House and Senate [and] the president moved himself so much to the center. When the Republicans came up with welfare reform he vetoed it twice and then signed it the third time and ran on it."

If what she says is accurate, her own positions seem right in tune with the American people. So, what about the year 2000?

She insists she has no presidential aspirations, but then the final question is: Why not?

FIRST there was Geraldine Ferraro's vice-presidential bid. Then came the Year of the Woman and an unprecedented number of women gained seats in the US Congress.

Today, with an increasing number of American women breaking through the glass ceiling and taking on positions of power, there is one question that still remains: Is America ready to elect a female president?

New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, a fiscally conservative, socially moderate Republican and the US's only woman governor, who this week paid a visit to Israel, has only one answer: Yes, absolutely, yes.

Does this mean the 50-year-old patrician Whitman, a shining star in the Grand Old Party's post-election cloudy sky, has her sights set on the White House come the year 2000?

While she denies having ambitions beyond a second term as New Jersey's governor - her first term ends in 1997 - there is no doubt that the Republican party, which selected her to counter President Clinton's 1995 state-of-the-union address and considered her as a potential Bob Dole running mate, is watching Whitman, one of their most powerful and palatable representatives.

Unlike those in the far right's anti-abortion, anti-free international trade, anti-women and gays-in-the-military camp, Whitman, who is lauded for curbing New Jersey's income tax by 30 percent and creating 117,000 new jobs, stands for a more centrist, pragmatic, Rockefelleresque platform.

In addition to her fiscal savvy, she is known for her ability to tackle tough problems head on, her pro-choice stance, her belief that sexual orientation and gender should not keep a person from any job, including military positions, and her efforts to foster relationships with international partners.

Accompanied by a 100-member trade delegation of New Jersey businesspeople, Whitman, who is tall and blonde with a commanding presence, delivered the opening night's address at the Jerusalem Business Conference and spent six days touring Israel's cultural and historical sights.

"Israel is such an important trading partner because it's a gateway to the Middle East," says Whitman, noting that Israel is New Jersey's sixth largest trading partner, having imported nearly \$744 million worth of New Jersey's exports in 1995. Approximately 30 Israeli businesses are headquartered in the garden state.

Whitman, who decided not to visit the Hashmonean Tunnel due to possible political implications, prefers not to voice her opinion on highly charged issues such as

the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, but says she is sensitive to the complexity of the local situation. After visiting the Golan Heights she says "you come away with an appreciation of the situation here and the pressure and concerns facing Israelis."

has two teenaged children, is the grandson of a former governor of New York.

Throughout her political life Whitman has been a steadfast middle-of-the-road Republican. After graduating from Wheaton College with a degree in government, she worked on Republican campaigns and began developing projects geared towards reaching out to groups who have traditionally supported the Democrats, such as the elderly, women and the poor.

In the 1980s she was appointed to the Board of Public Utilities and in 1990 she came within three percentage points of beating the incumbent senator, Bill Bradley.

In 1993, running on the promise to slash income taxes, she unexpectedly unseated Jim Florio by a narrow margin of 49%-48%.



Director of the Bank of Israel Jacob Frenkel (right) chats with Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky at the Cairo Economic Conference. (AP)

Egypt sold itself in Cairo

Despite initial doubts about the success of the summit, participants are feeling positive about it. David Harris reports

FOR months before the conference, Israel's business community fell victim to the region's politicians. President Hosni Mubarak led a failed attempt to link the peace process with the Middle East North Africa economic summit - among the many threats to emanate from



Cairo was: "No Hebron withdrawal; no summit." However, despite the rhetoric, 3,500 delegates arrived in Cairo ready for Mubarak's opening address on Tuesday.

While welcoming the world's politicians, civil servants and business people, the president used the opportunity to sell his country's economic reform program and apparent recovery - a budget deficit of 1.2 percent of GDP in 1996, and 6% inflation predicted for next year, he proudly reported. "This year Egypt joined the world economy," he added.

Yet, traveling through Cairo's streets, where traffic causes a thick smog and where the city's 13 million inhabitants all seem intent on causing as much mayhem on the road as possible, one is painfully aware of the immense hardship and overwhelming poverty that envelops the vast majority of the population of this and every other Egyptian city, town and village.

While the Egyptian government has successfully sold more than 100 of its companies in recent years, the benefits are clearly not being reaped by the average Cairo inhabitant. It seems far more likely that the lion's share of the profits - economic and social - is split among Egypt's elite, including the dozens of impeccably attired businessmen attending their "home" conference.

These entrepreneurs have this week had the opportunity to show potential foreign investors what Egypt in general and their companies in particular have to offer. And it would seem the foreign delegates were keen to see the goods. Throughout the three-day event, executives from the likes of Amoco, General Electric and Renault could be seen in discussions with local businesspeople.

Indeed, by the time the event itself commenced, even Foreign Minister David Levy, was calling the event "the Cairo conference." A week ago, Egypt's ambassador to Tel Aviv, Mohammed Bassoumy, said "This is no longer an economic summit, but an economic conference," everyone in the room realized that he accepted that Egypt would, in all likelihood, be the main beneficiary.

While Egypt is calling the "summit" a "conference," many have highlighted that the snubbing of the non-invited Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has acted as a put-down to the official government delegation from Jerusalem. But, at the same time, it gave Israel's businesspeople a green light to look for investment opportunities, joint ventures and new markets.

"This is now a business conference," said Manufacturers' Association president Dan Propper. "Business people can feel the potential. There's a real positive tension in the air, of people who know that they can find here potential partners." Yet there were also those in Cairo who saw that the Israelis did not seem that keen to turn it into something more tangible. "Look at all the Israelis congregating together," said one Egyptian official. "They must learn to mix."

But that is exactly what some, if not all, of the delegation came to Cairo to do.

"The advantage of the conference is that you are not working all the time," said Arka Medical managing director Barbara Faktor. "Having the same meeting [following the Casablanca and Amman summits] every year, with the same people and more, there will be very good progress." On the whole, Israel's business community received a warm welcome, and even where it was more reserved, Arab businesspeople seemed able to distinguish between Israeli politician and entrepreneur.

"There is no stability in Israel today," said Mohamed Rayan from the Egyptian Foreign Investment and Touristic Development Company. Looking to create a transportation corridor between Jordan, Israel and Egypt, Rayan is for now hunting only in Jordan for a strategic partner in the \$10 million project. But, adds Rayan, when the time is right politically, he will immediately look to Israel. "We will be happy to contact them. Economic cooperation is the best way forward."

Some foreign investors take a more pragmatic view. "Investments to me," said one,

"are about making money, not international borders. If I find what I'm looking for in Israel, or anywhere else for that matter, I'm ready to sign."

There are those who believe that everyone who participated in Cairo '96 is a winner, particularly in the long term. Josef Wassef owns the Heliopolis-based Fabulous Sportsweat. In his view those who came to do business and look at profits have to win. Those who stayed away can in no way benefit, said Minister of Economy and Trade Maher Masri. While he understands the decision of Palestinian businesspeople to stay away, he believes they are guilty of an error of judgment.

Koor managing director Benny Gaon is among those favoring the long-term approach.

"Peace is a long-term investment," he said, "there are no winners or losers today, but at the end of the day, all those who participate in the peace process are going to win."

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Hospitals welcome complementary medicine

Alternative practices and folk remedies find a home in the health establishment, reports Wendy Elliman

PEOPLE today are living longer than ever before, but they aren't necessarily feeling better, and the very lifestyle that lengthens our life span is the culprit. We live in remorselessly stressful societies, with Israel among the most stressed on earth. Our diet is heavy on hormone-injected meat, devitalized white bread, and chemical-filled fruits and vegetables. And, we're healed by medical technologies that demand our dependence on medical technology, and our relinquishing of home control for even minor ailments.

The pendulum started its swing back some 30 years ago with what then went by the name of "alternative" medicine, constituting an important part of the oscillation. At first largely the preserve of the faddish and the genuinely weird, the practice of alternative medicine has grown increasingly respectable over the years. Its very name changes - first to complementary medicine, and now to integrated or natural medicine - mark its changing status. Further proof that this approach has come of age is that it's now dispensed by MDs in university and general hospitals in North America, Europe and all over Israel.

Israel's first Department of Integrated Medicine opened at Assaf Harofeh Hospital in 1991, and treats up to 14,000 patients a year. "The hospital was very receptive when I proposed such a department," says its head, Dr. Shay Pintov. "The underlying idea was to gather all the different nonconventional medicine methods under a single roof - from the traditional folk practices, to accepted complementary techniques which extend normal therapeutic practice, to therapies that claim healing powers, but are still not scientifically based. It's part of a trend throughout the Western world: People today are increasingly aware of their own health, and tired of chemical medical solutions."

The Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical Center, in Jerusalem was another early entrant in the field, opening its downtown Complementary Medicine Clinic in 1990 "as a result of popular demand," says its head, Dr. Martine Toledano. "There's a crowded market for this kind of medicine, with part of that crowd doing it major discredit by promising wonders and miracles. It was clear to us there was a place for the practice of complementary medicine by professional medical doctors."

Although the Hadassah clinic is staffed entirely by physicians, who assess biochemical test results and CT scans before deciding on treatment, most Jerusalem doctors were initially unwilling to refer their patients. "They didn't believe in what they couldn't explain scientifically," says Toledano. "But things have changed very rapidly and we now get referrals from hospitals and clinics all over the city. Today, most accept that the best way to practise medicine is by recognizing there are many ways to help a patient. Someone with severe backache, for example, can be treated for pain with a shot of Voltarin, with Chinese herbs, acupuncture or reflexology, depending on what's best for him. In short, complementary medicine adds therapeutic tools to the physician's arsenal."

The growth of complementary medical practice is a direct expression of public disillusion with conventional therapies, according to Professor Raphael Melmed, head of Behavioral Medicine at Hadassah in Ein Kerem. "In a typical situation, a patient comes to a doctor with a persistent complaint. He's sent for investigations and consultations in different departments. When there's no clear diagnosis, he tends to be regarded as a nuisance. His doctor, however, is under pressure to treat him, and he can thus become the unfortunate recipient of inappropriate responses from a frustrated physician or surgeon, at risk for procedures which carry high morbidity and even mortality."

Melmed's speciality of behavioral medicine is an important area of complementary medicine. It is of particular help, he says, in dealing with the tensions of illness, or life, situations which influence health. In essence, it helps patients regain a sense of control over stresses which they feel are out of control, and in so doing restores the equilibrium of living. In the US, over 400 universities now offer some level of behavioral medicine training. In Israel, different relaxation and stress-reduction techniques have been developed for a whole gamut of disorders - among them

headache, migraine, asthma, vascular disorders, hypertension, anxiety states, angina pectoris, diarrhea, ulcers, skin disorders and cancer.

IN ADDITION to clinical work, doctors are also anxious to understand how relaxation and other natural-medicine techniques work - to bring them in from the cold and into the mainstream of medical science. Investigation of the physiological and biochemical processes of illness have shown that changes occur in the cells in stressed individuals. The challenge is to make sense of them.

Research into hypnosis - a 5,000-year old practice accepted as a therapeutic technique by the American Medical Association only in 1958 - has found evidence that cellular changes take place in the body, alongside attitude changes. A California surgeon, Dr. Peter Mutke, even claims hypnosis stimulated cellular growth in the breasts of 20 women who came to him in search of larger mammary glands. Acupuncture is believed to work by making the body release greater amounts of natural painkilling hormones known as endorphins.

Research into natural and folk-healing techniques is a growing field worldwide. Israel's first and so far only academic research unit in this area is the Natural Medicine Research Unit (NMRU) that opened at Hadassah two years ago, under British-born physician Dr. Sarah Sallon. "Traditional medicine systems are a potential treasure house," she says. "Many traditional medicines work as well or better than conventional ones, but their recipes are incomprehensible in the West because they're not written in the language of modern science. Disciplines like yoga and tai chi are more than exercise regimens: They're mind-body empowerment techniques that have developed in the East over thousands of years."

The NMRU's job is to validate and, if possible, explain natural therapies and disciplines that can improve health. Its scientists are

testing honey and propolis produced by bees on special diets, to develop an ointment that heals human burns and ulcers. They've recently completed a controlled scientific study of the efficacy of an ancient Tibetan plant recipe in unclogging painful arteries in elderly legs - a study which brought the Dalai Lama himself to Hadassah in a show of support.

A joint NMRU-Canada study is now under way, examining the possible healing properties of some 500 different kinds of seaweed. And a six-month study of mind-body disciplines, such as yoga and tai chi ended this summer. Forty nurses from high-stress units in Hadassah and a number of senior administrators took part: They reported important and sometimes dramatic improvement, in sleeping, in reduction of backpain, less stress at work and at home, and general wellbeing. Some even gave up smoking.

At the request of Hadassah's Nursing Administration, the NMRU is continuing courses for nurses; the Unit is also planning others in tai chi, chiqung and shiatsu for midwives, women in labor and oncology patients, to see whether these disciplines help both prevent certain diseases and assist in the management of disease entities.

Another major project currently under way is the design of an innovative database of the Middle East's medicinal plants, in conjunction with Israel's National Herbarium. Listing plants and herbs from the healing traditions of Jews, Beduin and Druse, the unit plans, funding permitting, to interview traditional healers from the Jewish and Arab communities. As Sallon points out, some of the best of modern drugs come from similar sources: digitalis from foxgloves, aspirin from the willow, opiates from poppies and vincristine from the Madagascar periwinkle plant.

Integrated or natural medicine, claim its enthusiasts, has a major role to play in mediating the paces of progress. Its emphasis on mind-body control and relaxation can answer to the relentless stress of post-industrial living. Its insistence on healthy non-processed foods speaks for itself. And the way in which it re-empowers the patient in his own healing and gives him a greater role in safeguarding his own well-being already takes him several steps along the pathway to good health.



Nurses from high-stress units at Hadassah relax in a yoga class. (Karen Ben-Zion)

'Your body can look after itself'

THE women are lying on mattresses, breathing deeply. "Look inside yourself," encourages yoga teacher Diane Bloomfield. "Turn your mind to your inner world, to that infinite source of energy that nurtures you. Focus on what's happening inside your body at this moment."

Most focused of them all, most flexible and most adept at the more complicated movements is a woman aged 77. Louise Gartner is visiting from Dallas, Texas, and she's joined the class because she's funding the NMRU's research into yoga and tai chi; in its second year. Slender, elegant and unmistakably Texan, Gartner's life passion is natural medicine.

"I've done yoga daily for 50 years," she says. "I read an article about a famous yogi in *Life* magazine, and went across to Mexico to study with her. In 1947, I started a daily yoga class in the Pageboy Maternity factory, where I was a designer for 26 years. It was an unusual thing at that time and in that place."

Gartner read about Dr. Sarah Sallon's work in *The Texas Jewish Post* last year, and got in touch with her. "She's my catalyst," says Gartner. "I want to help her unit's research, because doctors want evidence before they'll believe anything. So I'm going to help her get the evidence, even though I know that it's there."

Among Gartner's plans is supporting the introduction of natural-medicine courses at medical schools both at Hadassah and in Texas. "Medical schools concentrate too heavily on teaching their students how to get someone well when they're critically ill," she says. "I think we should learn from the ancient Chinese, that a doctor's more important job is to maintain health. And you do that by treating the body right. Nutrition, she maintains, is the basis of it all. Once I learned about vitamin C, my children never had antibiotics again!"

"I firmly believe if you eat right from the time you're a child, you build your body strong, and then, if you keep it strong, it can look after itself."

W. E.

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For reservations and further information: SHORASHIM, POB 7588, 14 Rehov Abarbanel Rehavia, Jerusalem 91074. Tel. 02-5666231 (9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.). Ask for Romit, Tami or Varda.

Israel gets the brush-off at US Jewish federations meet

US Jewish fundraisers gave Israel short shrift at their conference this week. Marilyn Henry reports from Seattle that the assembly made a polite job of glossing over its differences

A bomb scare cut short the opening session Wednesday night of the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations. That may have been the single moment of excitement of the sluggish, four-day event. Some 3,000 lay and professional leaders from American fund-raising agencies converged on this Pacific Northwest city for an assembly that is considered the highlight of the Jewish communal year. Not this year. "There's a malaise," said Sandi Goldstein of the Los Angeles federation. So when Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu canceled his personal appearance - scheduled for last night - to attend to the Hebrew talks, it simply deflated an already numb agenda. The assembly, which was shy of compelling issues, also seemed to give Israel short shrift. That was

startling, given that federations are the main link between most American Jews and Israel. The Jewish Agency, the vaunted partner of the American fund-raisers, was a wallflower in Seattle. Agency head Avraham Burg was not scheduled to be part of last night's main event, the international plenary. Instead, Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav was scheduled to make a presentation on the Israel Experience. And, to add insult to injury, Burg was con-

signed to delivering "remarks" at the assembly's opening - which then were canceled by the bomb scare. The hottest issue was proposed legislation barring Reform and Conservative conversions in Israel. However, that was dispensed with in a short, cordial debate at a meeting Wednesday of the board of delegates. The board approved a resolution urging the Netanyahu government to abstain from legislation that would change any aspect of the Law of Return or the "current situation."

There was some minor tussling about the language - and punctuation - of the resolution, but there was no passionate debate about the significance of the legislation, or whether this topic was even within the council's domain. It was as if everyone decided to behave themselves once the board meeting was called to order, despite days of backstairs debates about whether this would be a rerun of the 1988 "Who is a Jew" imbroglio. And they glossed over the question of whether it should be treated as an internal Israeli matter, or one that should engage the 189 autonomous federations of North American Jewry, whose primary purpose is fund-raising. When the council's board did address the legislation, the mood - like much of the rest of the assembly - was resigned. The legislation likely "will happen, notwithstanding what we may do today," David Minkin, an Atlanta attorney who leads a council panel on religious pluralism, told delegates before the vote. The overall lack of attention to Israel has been growing steadily for a number of years, according to veterans of CJF assemblies. Last year, much of the "Israel" component was devoted to mourning prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, sandwiched between events on fund-raising and Jewish spirituality. But the absence of a clear Israel agenda does not mean the community is concentrating its attention elsewhere. The various segments of the community each face their own internal dilemmas. The federation world is struggling to maintain local social services amid budget cuts at the US federal level, while fund-raising is only now starting to emerge from a years-long slump. Federations also are trying unceasingly to work out a modus vivendi for the different streams of Judaism, which are demanding a greater voice in federation decisions - even though they can't agree with each other. Within the religious streams, there is ferment. There are battles for the souls of the Orthodox and Conservative movements, which are feeling pressure from both the left and right within their ranks. Perhaps the hottest cauldron is the Reform movement, which has undergone a seismic generational shift in leadership. Reform ultimately may take the biggest drubbing for leading the campaign among American Jews against the conversion legislation. Some have suggested that the Reform movement's push for civil rights in Israel may collide with its commitment to democracy. "These Americans love their democracy even more than pluralism," said one bemused Israeli observer here. "Israel is also a democracy. Are they going to say that democracy is fine, except when it gives the haredim power?"

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Shares rise in anticipation of Hebron agreement

SHARES rose yesterday amid growing confidence that an agreement would be reached on redeployment in Hebron.

The Maof Index climbed 0.57 percent to close at 204.91, while the Two-Sided Index added 0.68 percent to 195.37.

Dollar floats up on raft of positive comment

LONDON (Reuters) - The dollar firmed against the mark in Europe yesterday after a raft of comments from German, US and Japanese officials that they were comfortable with a strengthening US currency.

On the European bourses, leading shares in London and Paris fell back from opening highs and closed flat.

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FINAL HOURS

(Continued from Page 1) But the presence of the dignitaries relieves the tension. They bring out the onlookers, both Palestinian and Israeli.

HOT PURSUIT

(Continued from Page 1) demand that Israel establish deadlines for implementation of future withdrawals specified in the Oslo 2 agreement and establish stages for discussion of permanent settlement issues.

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Caminiti unanimous NL MVP Maccabi comeback vs. CSKA falls short

NEW YORK (Reuters) - San Diego Padres third baseman Ken Caminiti, who helped lead his team to its first division title in 12 years, became the fourth unanimous choice as National League Valuable Player on Monday.



GOLDEN BOY - Ken Caminiti hit 40 homers this season.

Caminiti, who led the charge that put the Padres over the top in the National League West, hit 326 home runs and posted club records with 40 homers and 130 runs batted in. He was third in the National League with 151 RBIs, tied for fifth in homers and sixth in batting.

Table with columns for player name and statistics: Caminiti, SD 28; Piazza, LA 18; Burks, Col 7; Jones, Atl 7; Bonds, SF 7; Galarraga, Col 6; Sheffield, Fla 5; Jordan, StL 4; Bagwell, Hou 4; Finley, SD 3; Smoak, Atl 3; Larkin, Cin 2; Grierson, Atl 2; Gibson, NY 2; Sosa, Chi 2; Karros, LA 1; Rodriguez, Mon 1; Hurdley, NY 1; Johnson, NY 1; Bichette, Col 1; Worrell, LA 1; Brown, Fla 1; Hoffman, SD 1; Alou, Mon 1.

third, and were the only others named on all 28 ballots. Fourteen points are given for first place, nine for second, eight for third and down to one for 10th.

RBI for a team that hit just 252, but still made the postseason. Burks, who stayed healthy for the first time since joining Colorado in 1994, exploded for 40 homers and 128 RBIs with a .344 batting average. He also topped the league with 142 runs scored and a .639 slugging percentage, finished in the top five in batting

average (second), doubles (second), RBI (fifth), homers (tied for fifth) and triples (tied for fifth). Caminiti joined Jeff Bagwell of the Houston Astros (1994), Mike Schmidt of the Philadelphia Phillies (1980) and Orlando Cepeda of the St. Louis Cardinals (1967) as the only other unanimous National League MVPs.

THE real Maccabi Tel Aviv finally stood up last night vs. CSKA Moscow, but too late as their valiant comeback from a 20-point first-half deficit ended in a frustrating 89-80 road loss to the Russians.

The defeat dropped Maccabi to 3-4 in Euroleague play, severely hurting the team's chances of finishing in any of the top three places in Group A, meaning the club will face a hard road ahead, likely bracketed with Europe's elite in the groupings for further Euroleague play.

Maccabi continued its Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde routine - like the little girl in the nursery rhyme, when they were good they were very, very good, but when they were bad they were horrid.

In fact, horrid doesn't begin to describe the awful first half offensive display that got Maccabi in trouble in the first place. With a shooting percentage lower than the Dead Sea - plagued largely by the off-form, injured Oded Katash - Scherf's club watched as CSKA's two Sergeis, Bazarevich and Panov, and foreigner Marcus Webb led the rout.

ARYEH DEAN COHEN

CSKA's lead was back to 18-46-28. But then it happened: tighter defense and better shot selection helped Maccabi mount a rally, and a basket by Radovic - who played a key part in the comeback but forced too many shots - and one by Nadav Henefeld brought Maccabi within striking distance at 52-41. But no sooner had they rallied then Maccabi faltered again, as a three-pointer by Bazarevich keyed a 10-2 CSKA spurt that made it 62-43 with just under 12 minutes left.

That's when Scherf finally pulled the plug on the injured Katash, sending him to the bench and inserting Doron Sheffer into the line-up, with immediate results. Sheffer ran the offense smoothly, and Maccabi's moribund outside game suddenly sprang to life as Henefeld, Sheffer and White buried three-pointers to suddenly cut the lead to 64-54.

Radovic scored some quick baskets and then White jammed one home off a steal as Maccabi's defense swarmed all over CSKA, leading to fast break after fast break. When Buck Johnson hit two foul shots moments later, the scoreboard showed the score tied at 68-68, even though it should have read only 68-66, for CSKA. Unfortunately, the extra two points Maccabi was given never made a difference in the outcome.

stretch, then hit a three to make it 82-74.

Meanwhile, Maccabi ironically had only White to rely on offensively. Even his late scoring proved unimportant so long as CSKA controlled the backboards down the stretch as the Maccabi comeback proved too little, too late.

White had a fantastic game, finishing with 33 points, but Maccabi's anemic offensive performance can be seen in the fact that the next highest scorer was Radovic with 12. Buck Johnson played White's role of disappointing big man this time, settling for just seven points.

Katash, who suffered his injury during Monday night's victory over Rishon LeZion where he scored 33 points, was way off that form, and scored just two points. Sheffer finished with a flourish, scoring seven in the second half and nine overall, but again, Maccabi offered little outside threat, except for the brief series of three-pointers in the second half.

Things don't get much better for Scherf & Co. - they face Hapoel Jerusalem in league play Sunday night at Yad Eliashu before heading off to Milan to play Stefanel Milan next Thursday night. While their second-half comeback earned them some needed respect, unless something unusual happens to their Group A opponents, the "hot" winter of Euroleague action Maccabi fans were promised in the preseason may have already turned very, very cold.

Table with columns: GROUP A, W, L, Pts. Stefanel Milan 6, 3, 13; CSKA Moscow 4, 3, 11; Ulker 3, 4, 10; Maccabi Tel Aviv 3, 4, 10; Partizan 3, 4, 10; Limoges 2, 6, 9.

Williams dealt to Indians in Giant trade

CLEVELAND (Reuters) - The Cleveland Indians, facing the possible free-agent defection of slugger Albert Belle, acquired star third baseman Matt Williams from the San Francisco Giants on Wednesday for three players.

Kent and Vizcaino were acquired during the season from the New York Mets for All-Star Carlos Baerga and first baseman Eddie Murray was traded to the Baltimore Orioles.

Unbeaten Bulls breeze along

CHICAGO (AP) - Toni Kukoc came off the bench to score 26 points as the unbeaten Chicago Bulls maintained their mastery of the Miami Heat by winning 103-71 Wednesday.

Arsenal, Liverpool win League Cup replays

LONDON (Reuters) - Premier league Arsenal and Liverpool scored big wins in English League Cup third round replays on Wednesday.

4 local players reach Jaffa satellite semis

FOUR local tennis players, but only two seeds, have reached the semifinal rounds of the second leg of the four-week satellite being played in Jaffa.

Bet. Jerusalem hopes to knock Hap. PT from top of table

AN enthralling round of National League soccer action is in store this weekend as local action resumes following the week's break during which the national team lost embarrassingly to Cyprus.

look pretty rosy in the Negev. Maccabi Herzliya will go out tomorrow with a new coach and hopes it can at last register a win.

Scoreboard

Scoreboard table with columns: CONFERENCE, W, L, Pct, GB. Eastern Conference: Miami 5, New York 2, Orlando 2, Philadelphia 3, Washington 3, Boston 2, New Jersey 0. Western Conference: Houston 5, Utah 3, Minnesota 3, Denver 3, Dallas 2, San Antonio 2, Vancouver 0.

Walls R Us Chanukkah Sale!

Advertisement for Walls R Us Chanukkah Sale, featuring text: Painters, Founded 1925, Chanukkah Sale! One 'window-bars' per room, painted free, or 'Art-nak' 'Hamerite' with each room painted.

NATIONAL LEAGUE table with columns: P, W, D, L, GF, GA, Diff, Pts. Hapoel Petah Tikva 8, 7, 1, 0, 18, 5, 13, 22; Betar Jerusalem 8, 6, 2, 0, 17, 5, 12, 20; Hapoel Beersheba 8, 5, 0, 3, 9, 7, 2, 15; Maccabi Tel Aviv 8, 4, 2, 2, 14, 12, 2, 14; Maccabi Haifa 8, 4, 2, 2, 9, 9, 0, 14; Bnei Yehuda 8, 4, 1, 3, 10, 10, 0, 13; Hapoel Kfar Sava 8, 3, 1, 4, 11, 14, -3, 10; Hapoel Jerusalem 8, 3, 1, 4, 11, 14, -3, 10; Ironi Rishon LeZion 8, 3, 0, 5, 7, 13, -6, 9; Hapoel Taiba 8, 2, 2, 4, 6, 9, -3, 8; Hapoel Tel Aviv 8, 2, 1, 5, 11, 15, -4, 7; Hapoel Haifa 8, 1, 1, 6, 5, 9, -4, 4; Hapoel Be'er Sheva 8, 1, 1, 6, 5, 9, -4, 4; Zairim Holon 8, 0, 1, 7, 1, 11, -10, 1; Maccabi Herzliya 8, 0, 1, 7, 1, 11, -10, 1.

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Jays, Pirates make 9-player trade. The Pittsburgh Pirates continue to deal off veterans for prospects, trading second baseman Carlos Garcia to the Toronto Blue Jays yesterday for three minor league pitchers and three players to be named.

Botham back with England. Former-all-rounder and captain Ian Botham is back on board with the England cricket team. Botham, who has been involved in media work since his retirement three years ago, has been asked to act as a technical adviser on the upcoming tour of Zimbabwe and New Zealand.

Moussa downplays Israel's economic role in region

DAVID HARRIS CAIRO

ISRAEL is no longer a central player in the region, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa said yesterday at the Cairo economic conference's final press conference. Unlike the previous economic conferences in Casablanca and Amman, at Cairo Israeli hegemony gave way to a strengthening of relations among Arabs.



MENA Economic Summit

Moussa also had insisted that the closure in the territories appear in the summit's final communique. The communique outlined the hardships the Palestinians face under the

ongoing closure and called for its immediate end on the basis of guaranteed security for all sides.

The statement also addressed the general economic needs of the Middle East, outlining the requirement for additional privatization and the cooperation of foreign business partners.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor described the conference as highly successful, words supported by PA Planning and International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath. However, those party to the final summit declaration were locked in discussions for most of yesterday, trying to agree on the wording of the statement.



Finance Minister Meridor

as to whether to include a reference to the closure. "They certainly didn't push

Israel into a corner here," Meridor said earlier in the day. Israel has been doing business and the politicians have all held very positive meetings with their Arab colleagues, he said.

Most Israeli businesspeople here said they succeeded in meeting Arabs and others, with some bringing Saudi Arabian guests with them to an official lunch hosted by Israel.

One of those who called for widespread participation from Israel's business community, Koor CEO Benny Gaon, said, "Overall I am happy, but one or two things did not go so well. I'll only talk about

them when we're back in Israel." Israel's regional project coordinator, Yossi Vardi, meanwhile, said there is general satisfaction among participants from all countries "despite the conference starting on two left feet."

However, the Labor Party's representative at the summit, Ephraim Sneh, said there was a gloom overshadowing the event. "Israel was pushed aside," he said. "It's very sad Israel has lost its leading economic role in the Middle East."

He added that an IDF withdrawal from Hebron would not automatically ease tensions.

WEATHER forecast for Israel with a map and table of weather conditions for various cities like Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beer Sheva, and Dead Sea.

Israeli consul in Cairo to meet with Azzam today

DAVID HARRIS CAIRO

ISRAEL'S consul in Cairo is allowed to meet today with Azzam Azzam, the Maghar man arrested in Egypt last week on suspicion of spying for Israel.

The visit was agreed upon during a meeting last night between Egypt's Deputy Prime Minister Yousef Wally and Assad Assad, Prime Minister Binayamin Netanyahu's adviser on minorities and political affairs.

As soon as the police conclude their investigation, Wally said he would let Israel know what the exact situation is. He told Assad he understands the considerable Israeli concern for Azzam's welfare.

"I told Wally I believe in Egyptian justice," Assad said.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor yesterday pledged to continue pressing Egypt regarding Azzam's arrest.

"We've done all we can on the diplomatic front," Meridor said. "We have asked for our consul in Cairo to be able to meet Azzam as soon as possible."

The Israeli government has checked into every possibility to establish whether Azzam was involved in espionage but it is absolutely clear that he was not working for any Israeli agency, a senior government official said yesterday.

"Azzam is not an agent for any security arm," the source reiterated. "We have checked all avenues and he is simply not involved in any way."

Azzam's family representative Ayoub Kara met US State Department Peace Process and Regional Affairs Director Paul E. Simons in a bid to persuade the US to intervene on Azzam's behalf.

Batsheva Star contributed to this report.

WITH another business conference concluded, the suits headed for the airport and the organizers began removing all the paraphernalia that has adorned the huge Cairo international conference center these past three days.

Farewell handshakes and smiles abounded, as the last of the dwindling supply of business cards were distributed.

Yet, throughout the conference one thing stood out as being abnormal - the almost total absence of the Palestinian business community, which should have been one of the main players in the conference. As a result, the Palestinian Authority missed many of the opportunities available at the regional gathering.

PA misses out the most on Cairo's opportunities

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK DAVID HARRIS

This was readily apparent at the stalls where each country sold itself by distributing glossy brochures. The Israeli stall was staffed by senior government officials, who facilitated meetings between Israeli and foreign businesspeople. Just yards away, the PA stall was staffed by junior officials and Planning Minister Nabil Shaath and Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Maher Masri.

The two ministers offered business advice and then ran to make speeches in plenary sessions, immediately returning to the stall. One Israeli businessman asked

in despair, "How can we help them if they won't help themselves?"

Masri said he was disappointed by the lack of Palestinian participation, but added he understands the decision to stay away.

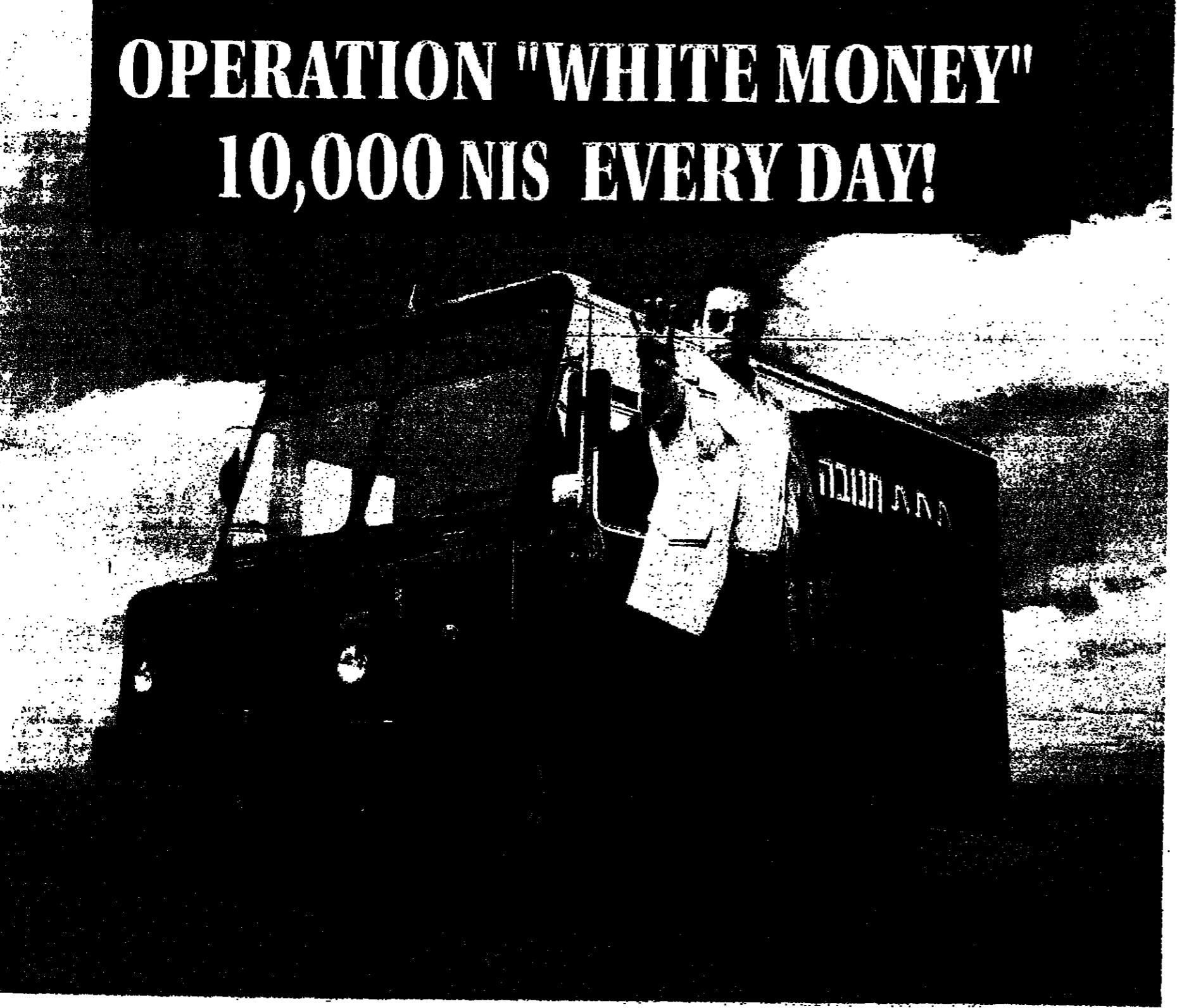
When Shaath appeared on a huge television screen in the press center, only one Asian journalist watched. Several hundred other journalists in the room paid no attention to Shaath as he talked of investments, industrial parks and future economic development in "Palestine."

AROUND THE WORLD

Table showing stock market and economic data for various countries including the US, Canada, Europe, and Japan.

Advertisement for EL-DANITZIN cellular phones, offering service from \$9 per day with insurance and mileage.

Advertisement for 'The Science of Jewish History' featuring audio cassettes and books.



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Advertisement for IBCA 79th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration at a Festive Dinner on Tuesday, December 3, 1996 at the Sheraton Hotel.

Advertisement for Mazada Tours featuring travel packages to Jordan, Egypt, and Israel, with a focus on Middle East experts.

Partial view of another page containing text about 'Rwandan Home' and 'Octo Yearly'.